

PN4201.H14

\*00137257\*



Standard Selections  
for  
Declamation.

HAAS

Franklin Publishing & Supply Co.

CLASS 808.5

THE LIBRARY  
OF THE  
STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE  
BLOOMSBURG, PA.

ACCESSION NO. 15304

Andruss Library  
Bloomsburg University  
Bloomsburg, PA. 17815





\*00137257



# STANDARD SELECTIONS

*for*

# DECLAMATION

FRANCIS B. HAAS

BENSON SCHOOL, PHILADELPHIA



PHILADELPHIA

FRANKLIN PUBLISHING AND SUPPLY COMPANY

Copyright, 1919, by  
**FRANKLIN PUBLISHING AND SUPPLY COMPANY**

15304

“The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”  
—2 COR. 3: 6.

## CONTENTS

---

	PAGE
PRINCIPLES OF DECLAMATION.....	11
RETURN OF REGULUS—Elijah Kellogg.....	23
ADDRESS AT GETTYSBURG—Abraham Lincoln	26
BIRTHDAY OF WASHINGTON—Rufus Choate .	29
LIBERTY AND UNION—Daniel Webster.....	33
VETERANS OF BUNKER HILL—Daniel Webster	37
SPARTACUS TO THE GLADIATORS—Elijah Kellogg.....	41
MARK ANTONY'S SPEECH OVER CÆSAR— William Shakespeare.....	46
RIENZI'S ADDRESS TO THE ROMANS—Mary Russell Mitford.....	52
MEN TO MAKE A STATE—Geo. Washington Doane.....	56
ONE HUNDRED YEARS A NATION—Grover Cleveland.....	62



## PREFACE

---

**W**HILE the teaching of formal oratory would be of doubtful value to the young pupil, yet the ability to express before a group of people a clear-cut idea in definite, persuasive language is an accomplishment that can be developed in most children. No doubt the percentage of our boys and girls who will sway the multitude by their forensic powers will be small, but the necessity for sane leaders who can think "on their feet" is becoming increasingly great. Among the many methods for discovering and developing this ability, it is doubtful if any rank higher than the appreciative study and declamation of a few standard selections. I am indebted to Mr. Henry W. Kind for his careful assistance with the typography of this little text.

F. B. H.



## FOREWORD TO TEACHERS

---

**S**PEAKING is truly a commonplace of life, yet history tells us that eloquence is developed and made of service by persistent self-training. A few general principles will therefore be discussed, with the belief that if only one or two of them be comprehended and consciously applied much good will result. It is also hoped that the mere presentation of the subject may lead to a more definite realization, on the part of the teacher and the pupil, that successful speaking is a combination of many factors.

No attempt has been made to interpret the selections. It is firmly believed that this should be done in the class-room, by a lesson in appreciation, which will precede the formal declamation. The teacher should also make sure that the background of the selection is possessed by all the pupils. Most of the selections are of such length that they should be divided among a number of pupils. It will be found that this tends to increase the interest, and at the same time the unity is not destroyed.

No amount of mechanical training will enable the pupil to reproduce the expression which results when the imagination has been fully aroused to the meaning of the subject. We usually detect, without much trouble, the insincerity of the man who tries to convince us by words that he is sorry, but who, in truth, does not feel so. Yet, curiously enough, there seem to be certain pupils who think and feel correctly on most

things, but who do not appear to give the proper outward expression to their real feelings. To this type of pupil the teacher who has in mind the fundamentals of expression may render some aid. The teacher, however, who succeeds best is the one who tries first to stimulate the imagination of the pupil and the class. For in most cases this is all that is necessary. No incentive to self-training is greater than the example of the trained teacher. Much of lasting truth is found in the old remark, to the effect, that when the congregation slumbers, it is time to wake the preacher.

## PRINCIPLES OF DECLAMATION

---

THE art of declamation must secure its guidance from the art of speaking, since declamation is merely the repetition of that which already has been spoken. A brief review of the more important principles of this art, it is hoped, will increase the pleasure and profit of both the speaker and the audience. No matter what form the speaking may take, certain important requirements are necessary for success. What is said must be understood by both the speaker and the audience. What is said must be said correctly, according to the best standards of pronunciation. What is said must be said in such a manner that the audience is persuaded into a feeling which will cause it to think or to act as the speaker desires.

**The Audience and the Speaker.**—In the declamation, that which is to be said is to be spoken directly to the audience. The ideas are carried by the spoken word. The speaker *faces* the audience, and the audience *observes* the speaker. Hence, while all the principles of good literature must be followed, in addition, the personality of the speaker has a great influence upon the result. Does the audience understand? Does it agree? Is it interested? Is it made weary? Is it more interested in the speaker than in the speech? Will it act as the speaker desires? The test of success is not the pleasure which the speaker gets from the sound of his own voice, but the result produced upon the audience.

It has been noted that the audience observes the speaker. This being so, it can readily be understood that any awkward, nervous movement, or any particularly ungraceful attitude is apt to distract the attention of the audience from what is being said. Frequently the nervousness of the speaker takes the form of failing to look at the audience, or of failing to speak to it. We have probably been bored at some time when forced to listen to a speaker who seemed to be unaware that an audience was present, or that it was present for the purpose of hearing what was being said.

To overcome faults such as these we must realize that we possess them. Then we must make a deliberate attempt to correct them. This frequently can only be accomplished by inviting the criticism of the audience. A frank discussion of the merits and faults of the declamation should take place in the class-room. If the speaker receives some definite suggestions concerning the faults to be avoided, and some definite help as to how to correct them, then the whole class will surely profit. Let us always remember, however, that our criticism should be made in a kindly spirit, because there is nothing that we dislike more than to be made "fun of" in public.

Much help may also be gained by careful observation of the methods of some good speakers. Success is a combination of following the good and avoiding the poor. There is, however, only one way to learn to swim—get in the water and profit all you can by the experience of those who know how.

**The Background.**—In order that the speaker may make some attempt to give to the selection the power and meaning that it had in its original setting, it is desirable that an attempt be made to understand the circumstances under which the speech was given

originally. Suppose, for example, the subject for declamation be the "Gettysburg Speech," by Lincoln. The meaning of the speech and the power and feelings of the speaker immediately have new light shed upon them when we become familiar with the historical conditions which form the background. When was the speech delivered? What great event happened at Gettysburg? Upon what occasion was the speech delivered? Was Lincoln the principal speaker? What was the chief cause of the disagreement between the North and the South? For what principles of government did Lincoln stand firmly during the war? Did the North stand solidly behind him? Was Lincoln a man easily excited? What was the effect of the speech upon the people of the North? Do you think it would make them more determined to win? What did Lincoln think of his own speech? What did the great orator who spoke for two hours before Lincoln say about this speech?

Against such a background as this much that is obscure in the speech will stand out clearly. New power will be given to its declamation. For it is hard to speak when we do not fully understand. Let us not forget that the attitude and sympathy of the audience will, in large measure, depend upon the extent to which this background is held in common with the speaker. Hence, whenever possible this background should be talked over in the class before the actual declamation takes place.

**The Selection.**—There are many things of great value which we may get for little expense from the study of a masterpiece. We may find out how someone who knows has done it. This is just as important in speaking as it is in making pies or painting a portrait.

There is one important difference between the masterpiece

which is intended to be read and the one which is intended to be spoken. If you do not, at first reading, understand what is written, you may turn back and read over again. But if you fail to catch the meaning from the word of the speaker, you cannot turn back. It is a scene that is lost. Hence the speaker tries to select for his use clear, definite, concise words. Words, that like the lens in the eye, gather the great picture before us, and present us with a miniature copy. Yet it is the same great picture. With exactly such clearness and conciseness does Lincoln avoid cumbersome phrases by the use of such crystal words as dedicate, consecrate, hallow.

Examine also the selection for its obedience to the rules of good literature. Test its unity; its emphasis; its coherence. Understand the meaning of every word. Notice whether the thought is expressed without the use of unnecessary words, or whether there is a tendency to ramble on after the important thing has been said. See if the important ideas are expressed clearly, so that no confusion is felt as to the meaning. Think of the selection as a whole. Form an opinion as to whether or not all the points that have been mentioned unite so as to exclude everything that does not bear directly upon the subject. In the beginning, in order that some of these suggestions may be carried out, it is advisable that a short selection be used for declamation.

**The Voice.**—Like a musical instrument, the voice is made to produce sound; and, like a musical instrument, it may be made to produce pleasant, agreeable sounds, or ugly, disagreeable sounds. In another important respect it is like the musical instrument. Both the musical instrument and the voice if they are to produce pleasant, agreeable sounds, must be played upon by someone who possesses pleasant, agreeable ideas. Many of us are unable fully



to understand the meaning of a musical selection, but most of us can understand the ordinary sounds made by the voice, which we call words. It is by hearing these words that the audience is to get the meaning of the speaker. Hence the speaker must first select the proper word to express the idea. We have already referred to this matter under the heading "The Selection." Next the speaker must deliver the word to the audience in such a way that the idea will be clearly understood. This means that the word must be pronounced distinctly and correctly.

Each word should be heard distinctly by every person in the audience. An indistinct word may change the entire meaning in such a way as to produce the opposite effect from that which is desired. Even when the indistinct word does not change the meaning, it usually leads to inattention on the part of the audience. We have noted before how difficult it is to give attention to a speaker when it is almost impossible to hear clearly more than a few words here and there.

In addition to speaking the word clearly, so that no doubt is left as to the word meant, it should be spoken correctly according to the standard of best usage. *Acrost* for "*across*"; *umberella* for "*umbrella*"; *histry* for "*history*"; *burgular* for "*burglar*"; *are* for "*our*"; *sentunce* for "*sentence*"; *walkin'* for "*walking*" are a few of innumerable examples of incorrect and slovenly pronunciation which are only too common. This careless pronunciation also is found quite frequently in combinations of words. Thus we find such sentences as "Wherer you goin'?" "Wherer are books?" A little thought given to examples such as these will make quite clear the necessity for distinctness and correctness in pronunciation. Only the deliberate doing of the correct thing, however, will be of any help to the speaker.

With a little courage, a few friends, and some practice anyone can make a list of his most common errors and gradually get rid of them.

**Emphasis.**—We have pointed out that distinct and correct pronunciation are important requirements of all good speech. Yet we may have both of these present and still have little interest on the part of the audience. A little thought will soon show us that all the words in a sentence are not of equal importance in expressing ideas. Further consideration will show that all ideas are not of the same value. A few of the more obvious methods by which the speaker may add emphasis to the more important words or ideas will be considered. It must never be forgotten, however, that the emphasis which we give to a word or to an idea must represent the way that we think and feel upon the subject.

**Stress.**—If our knock at the door is not heard, we knock a little louder. If, in our judgment, the meaning of a word requires that it be made more prominent among its companions, we stress it. In the line "The ploughman homeward plods his weary way" it is not difficult by stressing certain words to cause the hearer to think almost entirely of the place to which the ploughman is going, or, on the other hand, to think almost entirely of the weary man as he trudges along.

**Inflection.**—In speaking the sentence "You are his brother," used as a plain statement of fact, notice that the words are uttered in much the same tone as though they were played by the same key of the piano. Now speak the sentence so as to express surprise at the relation that he bears to you. Immediately there will be noticed, in some part of the sentence, a sliding up or down of the tone. This time the sentence could not be played with the

same key. In response to a different idea we have inflected some part of the sentence.

*Pitch.*—It will also be noticed that in the second case we have shifted the entire tone of the sounds to a different level. We may play the same piece of music on the middle keys of the piano or in a variety of other positions. But the reason that causes us to make the change is something that is going on in our mind concerning the idea. We have changed the pitch because the idea has changed. Notice the pitch in which the following lines are spoken:

“Cheerily, then, my little man,  
Live and laugh as boyhood can!”—*Whittier.*

Contrast the light and joyous attitude of mind expressed by these lines with the serenity of mind that is expressed in the following lines from Grey’s *Elegy*:

“The curfew tolls the knell of parting day;  
The lowing herd winds slowly o’er the lea;  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.”

*The Pause.*—In order to understand words in any form, whether written or spoken, they must be grouped together or phrased so as to bring out the meaning. We must know what words belong together. This grouping can easily be done in written language by the various marks of punctuation, but in speaking it is necessary to do it in other ways. Probably the most common way in speaking is by the use of the pause.

The pause has two other important uses in speech besides the help that it gives to the meaning. It is frequently used to give time for consideration of what has just been said, or to focus the

attention upon what is about to be said. In this latter respect it reminds us somewhat of the familiar "Stop! Look! Listen!" sign.

*The Rate of Speed.*—Speak the sentence "Bring some water" in the tone of voice that you would ordinarily use if the water were intended for drinking purposes. Do you think if you wanted the water to throw upon the fire that was threatening your home that there would be any change in the rate of speed with which you uttered the words? It does not take much imagination to think yourself in either of the above positions. Why do we say the words at a faster rate in one case than in the other? A little thought about the matter will show us that the words merely represent ideas, and that it is our ideas that have changed their rate of speed. The amount of time that the mind has to give to the idea in the two examples is no longer the same. The spirit of the piece has changed.

Along with the change in the speed of utterance it will also be noticed that there has been a change in the pitch. For example, read the two following selections in the way that you think best expresses the thought of the author. Notice the change in rate of movement and the corresponding change in pitch:

"All the little boys and girls,  
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,  
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,  
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after  
The wonderful music, with shouting and laughter."—*Browning*.

"Break, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me."—*Tennyson*.

A little thought will lead to the conclusion that as you give expression to such feelings as delight, anxiety, terror, reverence there is a natural change in the rate of movement, accompanied usually by a change in pitch.

**Expression.**—The debater desires to convince the audience and the judges. The lawyer desires to convince the jury. The teacher desires to convince the class. The speaker pleading for money for the Red Cross desires to convince the hearers of the necessity for help. In each of these instances the speaker desires to convince the audience of certain conditions or facts. Is this, however, sufficient? To be convinced that a certain group of people need help is not a very difficult matter. To feel so sorry that you actually must help them is sometimes an entirely different affair. We can easily see that the audience must not only be convinced of certain facts, but such feelings must be aroused that the action desired by the speaker will follow.

The dislike of many people for the mechanical piano-player when it was first given to the public was due to the fact that it lacked that quality which we call expression. Each note seemed to receive exactly the correct amount of time. The sounds appeared to be of equal loudness and the rate of speed did not seem to vary in a natural manner. Something was lacking. We like variety. We want some notes soft, some loud. We want some parts to go fast, some to go slowly. We want a pause here, a jump there. We want this variety because it has a meaning for us. It enables us to get an idea of the way the author feels. We want the music to have expression.

Good cake is the result of a number of things in combination. We may think separately of the various ingredients, yet they must be combined properly to suit our taste. Good music in the same

way is a result of the combination of a number of things. Why do we like to hear a certain selection played by one person, but not by another? The reason is that one performer can put together all the different things necessary for good playing in just the way that suits us. Our favorite performer has a certain feeling about the matter that we like.

Good speaking, like good piano playing, consists of a number of things in combination. Like piano playing, much may be learned if we do a little at a time, and do that little at frequent intervals. The test of expression is the feeling produced in the audience. It is a test with which you are perfectly familiar. How do you show approval of a good speech? Do you smile or laugh; or clap your hands; or nod your head in approval? Are you applauding because of the mere words that the speaker uses, or because he has certain ideas and feelings that cause him to use those words? The speaker that we admire is the one whose feelings cause him to express his thoughts with all the shades of emphasis that we like and understand. He has such feelings about his ideas that he utters them with expression. We will probably come inevitably to the conclusion that when we fail of success in speaking, it is due either to our failure to have clearly defined ideas, or our feelings about these ideas are not very strong.

**Poetry.**—Practically all that has been said thus far applies equally to the declamation of poetry. The added difficulty which comes to the speaking of this form of literature is due to that peculiar movement of the words which we call rhythm. The most common fault in reciting poetry is the tendency to emphasize the swing of the verse with insufficient attention to the meaning. In the ordinary stanza of poetry you will notice that the words are so

arranged that the accents appear to come at regular intervals. So regular, in fact, that if you desire you may recite the stanza in time as regular as the tick of a clock.

This sing-song tendency is still further increased because in most poetry we find certain lines at regular intervals ending with the same sound. This rhyme is so pleasant to the ear that we are apt to pause deliberately in order to hear the agreement. We know, however, that words must be grouped so as to make sense. Therefore we must try to speak the lines so that while the rhythm remains, and the beauty of the rhyme is heard, yet the meaning is not disturbed.

We know also that to speak an idea clearly and forcibly requires that the words be uttered in such a way as to stress only the important ones. By speaking two or three lines of ordinary prose in regular time it at once becomes apparent that the sense is destroyed, and the result is monotonous and displeasing.

Sometimes we go to the other extreme in speaking poetry, and while making the meaning clear, fail altogether to bring out the beauty that belongs to the rhythm and to the rhyme. Our object must therefore be to make the movement of the verse flow in such a way that while the sense is not destroyed, the stanza still expresses the emotions of the author.

**Summary.**—The essential principles of good speaking may be briefly stated as the ability to say words clearly and correctly; to give them the correct emphasis and to use them so as to express properly the ideas for which they stand. This means that the audience must hear them; must understand them; and finally must be in sympathy with the feelings of the speaker. Little of value can be hoped for from the study of rules of elocution, but much

progress may be made if we will remember that failure is usually the result when we speak words and not ideas, when we imitate feelings instead of expressing our own. The voice that imitates sorrow never possesses the tone that accompanies the expression of the genuine feeling. The laugh that does not express the feeling of joy is a sorrowful sound.



## THE RETURN OF REGULUS

---

**I**N one of the many battles of the Romans with the Carthaginians, Regulus, the Roman leader, was taken captive. He was held a prisoner for several years, and finally was sent to Rome on parole, with the hope that he would dissuade the Romans from attacking the Carthaginians. Regulus, however, did just the opposite of this. He urged his countrymen to renew the war with greater courage. Then, in spite of the pleadings of his friends, to break his parole, he returned to Carthage to what he knew would be certain death. Here in a speech to his captors he taunts them with having blood "like slimy ooze" instead of the "bright blood" of his brave countrymen. His speech as we have it was written by Elijah Kellogg, as he imagined Regulus to have spoken.

## THE RETURN OF REGULUS

---

**Y**E doubtless thought, judging of Roman virtue by your own, that I would break my plighted faith, rather than by returning, and leaving your sons and brothers to rot in Roman dungeons, to meet your vengeance. . . . If the bright blood which feeds my heart were like slimy ooze that stagnates in your veins, I should have remained at Rome, saved my life and broken my oath. If, then, you ask why I have come back, to let you work your will on this poor body which I esteem but as the rags that cover it,—enough reply for you, it is because I am a Roman!

Venerable senators, with trembling voices and outstretched hands, besought me to return no more to Carthage. The voice of a beloved mother,—her withered hands beating her breast, her gray hairs streaming in the wind, tears flowing down her furrowed cheeks,—praying me not to leave her in her lonely and helpless old age, is still sounding in my ears. Compared to anguish like this, the paltry torments you have in store is as the murmur of the meadow brook to the wild tumult of the mountain storm.

Go! bring your threatened tortures! The woes I see impending over this fated city will be enough to sweeten death, though every nerve should tingle with its agony! I die—but mine shall be the triumph; yours the untold desolation.

*Elijah Kellogg* (1813–1901).

## ADDRESS AT GETTYSBURG

---

ON November 19, 1863, thousands of people from all parts of the Union gathered at Gettysburg for the dedication of the National Cemetery. Here lay buried the Northern soldiers who had given their lives that the Union might be preserved. The formal speaker of the occasion was Edward Everett. He was perhaps the most finished orator of his day. For two hours he spoke to the multitude in his best style. When he had finished President Lincoln arose and spoke a few words to the waiting thousands. So profound was the impression of his words that he misunderstood the momentary silence that followed his speech to mean that he had failed. The next day he wrote of this failure to Mr. Everett, who in return wrote and told Lincoln that his few words would be remembered long after his own were forgotten. We know those few words for one of the masterpieces of English literature. For simple beauty, in clear, concise form, Lincoln's speech has not been excelled.

## ADDRESS AT GETTYSBURG

---

**F**OURSCORE and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation—or any nation so conceived and so dedicated—can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We are met to dedicate a portion of that field as the final resting-place of those who here gave their lives that that nation might live.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here; but it can never forget what they did here.

It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these

honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

*Abraham Lincoln* (1809-1865).

## THE BIRTHDAY OF WASHINGTON

---

**R**UFUS CHOATE, the author of "The Birthday of Washington," was in many ways one of the most scholarly of all American public men. His knowledge of the English language was almost unequalled. In 1841 he was elected to Webster's seat in the United States Senate, and he, like Webster, gave his great ability to the service of his country. In his eulogy of Washington he brings his great skill to bear upon the perpetuation of that name which is "First in the hearts of his countrymen." The author wants us to think of Washington's birthday as something more than a mere playday. He urges us as Americans to keep fresh in our minds the thanks which we owe to the "Father of his country."

## THE BIRTHDAY OF WASHINGTON

---

**T**HE birthday of the “Father of his Country”! May it ever be freshly remembered by American hearts! May it ever reawaken in them a filial veneration of his memory; ever rekindle the fires of patriotic regard to the country which he loved so well; to which he gave his youthful vigor and his youthful energy during the perilous period of the early Indian warfare; to which he devoted his life in the maturity of his powers, in the field; to which he again offered the counsels of his wisdom and his experience, as president of the convention that framed our Constitution; which he guided and directed from the chair of State, and for which the last prayer of his earthly supplication was offered up when it came the moment for him so well, and so grandly, and so calmly, to die! He was the first man of the time in which he grew. His memory is first and most sacred in our love; and ever hereafter till the last drop of blood shall freeze in the last American heart, his name shall be a spell of power and of might.



Yes, gentlemen, there is one personal, one vast, felicity which no man can share with him. It was the daily beauty and towering, matchless glory of his life which enabled him to create his country, and, at the same time, secure an undying love and regard from the whole American people. "The first in the hearts of his countrymen!" Yes, first! Undoubtedly there were brave and wise and good men before his day, in every colony. But the American nation, as a nation, I do not reckon to have begun before 1774. And the first love of that young America was Washington. The first word she lisped was his name. Her earliest breath spoke it. It is still her proud ejaculation; and it will be the last gasp of her expiring life!

Yes! Others of our great men have been appreciated—many admired by all. But him we love. Him we all love. About and around him we call up no dissentiment and discordant and dissatisfied elements, no sectional prejudice nor bias, no party, no creed, no dogma of politics. None of these shall assail him. Yes! When the storm of battle blows darkest and rages highest, the name of Washington shall nerve every American arm, and cheer every American heart. It shall relume that Promethean fire, that sublime fire of patriotism, that devoted love of country, which

his words have commended, which his example has consecrated. In the words of Lord Byron:

“Where may the wearied eye repose  
When gazing on the great,  
Where neither guilty glory glows  
Nor despicable state?  
Yes,—one, the first, the last, the best,  
The Cincinnatus of the West,  
Whom envy dared not hate,  
Bequeathed the name of Washington.  
To make man blush, there was but one.”

*Rufus Choate* (1799–1859).

## LIBERTY AND UNION

---

**D**ANIEL WEBSTER died in 1852 at the age of seventy. His public life covered one of the most critical periods in American history. In 1812 he was elected to Congress, and one of his first political acts was a criticism of the embargo. In 1825, after some years of private life, during which he practised law, he delivered an address at the laying of the corner-stone of Bunker Hill Monument. This speech, placed him among the great orators of the world. From now on he found ample opportunity in his public life for the use of his oratorical powers in the service of his country. Always he stood for the idea of Union. He believed in the immense future of America, and his orations were one of those powerful influences that helped to develop that strong sentiment for Union which carried the country through the Civil War.

## LIBERTY AND UNION

*Selected*

---

**I** PROFESS, sir, in my career hitherto, to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the preservation of our Federal Union. It is to that Union we owe our safety at home, and our consideration and dignity abroad. It is to that Union that we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country.

That Union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues in the severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce, and ruined credit. Under its benign influences these great interests immediately awoke, as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life. Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and, although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread farther and farther, they have not outrun its protection or its benefits. It has been to us all a copious fountain of national, social, and personal happiness.

I have not allowed myself, sir, to look beyond the Union to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion to see whether with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counsellor in the affairs of this government whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering not how the Union may be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it should be broken up and destroyed.

While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise! God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind! When my eyes shall be turned to behold, for the last time, the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dis-severed, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood!

Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and

honored throughout the earth, still full-high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured; bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as *What is all this worth?* nor those other words of delusion and folly, *Liberty first and Union afterwards*; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart—*Liberty AND Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!*

*Daniel Webster (1782–1852).*

## THE VETERANS OF BUNKER HILL

---

ON June 17, 1825, the corner-stone of the monument which marked the Battle of Bunker Hill was laid. The oration of the day was delivered by Daniel Webster, and by many it is considered his masterpiece and the oration that placed him with the world's great orators. Some forty survivors of the battle, in which General Warren, "the first great martyr" was killed, were present, and among the audience facing Webster was the great Lafayette. It is these veterans whom he addresses as "Venerable Men."

## THE VETERANS OF BUNKER HILL

*Selected*

---

**V**ENERABLE MEN: You have come down to us from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives that you might behold this joyous day. You are now where you stood fifty years ago this very hour, with your brothers and your neighbors, shoulder to shoulder in the strife of your country. Behold how altered! The same heavens are indeed over your heads, the same ocean rolls at your feet; but all else how changed! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon; you see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewn with the dead and the dying; the impetuous charge; the steady and successful repulse; the loud call to repeated assault; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death,—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more. All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs,



which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole happy population come out to welcome and greet you with a universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and defence. All is peace, and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness ere you slumber in the grave for ever. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils, and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you.

But, alas! you are not all here. Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Read, Pomeroy, Bridge! our eyes seek for you in vain amidst this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve that you have met the common fate of men. You lived at least long enough to know that your work had been nobly and success-

fully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of liberty you saw arise the light of peace, like

“another morn,

Risen on mid-noon,”

and the sky on which you closed your eyes was cloudless.

But, ah! him, the first great martyr in this great cause; him, the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart; him, the head of our civil councils and the destined leader of our military bands; whom nothing brought hither but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit; him, cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood like water before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage! How shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name? Our poor work may perish, but thine shall endure. This monument may moulder away; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy memory shall not fail. Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit.

*Daniel Webster (1782–1852).*

## SPARTACUS TO THE GLADIATORS

---

**A**T one time in Roman history it was the custom to make slaves of the captives taken in battle, and from among the most promising of these slaves to select some to be trained as gladiators. These gladiators fought for the pleasure of the public, and so popular did this form of amusement become that at one time, men made a business of buying slaves and training them for the arena. The wealthy nobility gave enormous shows in which great numbers of men fought each other to death for the amusement of the spectators. It was against this cruel treatment that the Thracian slave, Spartacus, led his fellow-slaves in revolt. In a powerful speech he denounced the inhuman practice of compelling men to fight each other for the pleasure of their masters. Finally he persuaded them to rebel, and although the revolution itself finally failed, it marked an epoch in the struggle of an oppressed people against the tyranny of another. The speech was written by Elijah Kellogg as he supposed Spartacus might have delivered it.

## SPARTACUS TO THE GLADIATORS

---

**Y**E call me chief, and ye do well to call him chief who, for twelve long years, has met upon the arena every shape of man or beast that the broad Empire of Rome could furnish, and yet never has lowered his arm. And if there be one among you who can say that, ever, in public fight or private brawl, my actions did belie my tongue, let him step forth and say it. If there be three in all your throng dare face me on the bloody sand, let them come on!

Yet, I was not always thus, a hired butcher, a savage chief of savage men. My father was a reverent man, who feared great Jupiter, and brought to the rural deities his offerings of fruits and flowers. He dwelt among the vineclad rocks and olive groves at the foot of Helicon. My early life ran quiet as the brook by which I sported. I was taught to prune the vine, to tend the flock; and then, at noon, I gathered my sheep beneath the shade, and played upon the shepherd's flute. I had a friend, the son of our neighbor; we led our flocks to the same pasture, and shared together our rustic meal.

One evening, after the sheep were folded, and we were all seated beneath the myrtle that shaded our cottage, my grandsire, an old man, was telling of Marathon and Leuctra, and how, in ancient times, a little band of Spartans, in a defile of the mountains, withstood a whole army. I did not know then what war meant; but my cheeks burned. I knew not why; and I clasped the knees of that venerable man, till my mother, parting the hair from off my brow, kissed my throbbing temples, and bade me go to rest, and think no more of those old tales and savage wars.

That very night the Romans landed on our shore, and the clash of steel was heard within our quiet vale. I saw the breast that had nourished me trampled by the iron hoof of the warhorse; the bleeding body of my father flung amid the blazing rafters of our dwelling. To-day I killed a man in the arena, and when I broke his helmet clasps, behold! he was my friend! He knew me,—smiled faintly,—gasped,—and died; the same sweet smile that I had marked upon his face when, in adventurous boyhood, we scaled some lofty cliff to pluck the first ripe grapes, and bear them home in childish triumph. I told the prætor he was my friend, noble and brave, and I begged his body, that I might burn it upon the funeral-pile, and mourn over him. Ay, on my knees, amid the dust and blood of the arena,

I begged that boon, while all the Roman maids and matrons, and those holy virgins they call vestal, and the rabble, shouted in mockery, deeming it rare sport, ~~forsooth~~, to see Rome's fiercest gladiator turn pale, and tremble like a very child, before that piece of bleeding clay; but the prætor drew back as if I were pollution, and sternly said, 'Let the carrion rot! There are no noble men but Romans!' And he, deprived of funeral rites, must wander, a hapless ghost, beside the waters of that sluggish river, and look—and look—and look in vain to the bright Elysian Fields where dwell his ancestors and noble kindred. And so must you, and so must I, die like dogs!

"O Rome! Rome! thou hast been a tender nurse to me! Ay, thou hast given to that poor, gentle, timid shepherd-lad, who never knew a harsher sound than a flute-note, muscles of iron and a heart of flint; taught him to drive the sword through rugged brass and plaited mail, and warm it in the marrow of his foe! to gaze into the glaring eyeballs of the fierce Numidian lion, ~~even as~~ a smooth-cheeked boy upon a laughing girl. And he shall pay thee back till thy yellow Tiber is red as frothing wine, and in its deepest ooze thy life-blood lies curdled!

"Ye stand here now like giants, as ye are! the strength of brass is in your toughened sinews; but to-morrow

some Roman Adonis, breathing sweet odors from his curly locks, shall come, and with his lily fingers pat your brawny shoulders, and bet his sesterces upon your blood! Hark! Hear ye yon lion roaring in his den? 'Tis three days since he tasted meat; but to-morrow he shall break his fast upon your flesh; and ye shall be a dainty meal for him.

“If ye are brutes, then stand here like fat oxen waiting for the butcher’s knife; if ye are men, follow me! strike down yon sentinel, and gain the mountain passes, and there do bloody work as did your sires at old Thermopylæ! Is Sparta dead? Is the old Grecian spirit frozen in your veins, that you do crouch and cower like base-born slaves beneath your master’s lash? O comrades! warriors! Thracians! if we must fight, let us fight for ourselves; if we must slaughter, let us slaughter our oppressors; if we must die, let us die under the open sky, by the bright waters, in noble, honorable battle.”

*Elijah Kellogg (1813–1901).*

## ANTONY'S SPEECH OVER CÆSAR'S BODY

---

**M**ARK ANTONY was a famous Roman general and politician. His oration, as we have it, is in the best style of that master of the English language, William Shakespeare. Antony in a speech of great power seizes upon the assassination of his protector, Julius Cæsar, as an opportunity to rout his enemies and lift himself into power.

His success, however, was short lived, for he in turn succumbs to the ambition to be a dictator. The people finally force him to flee from Rome, and after many attempts to regain his old authority he is said to have "fallen upon his sword."



## ANTONY'S SPEECH OVER CÆSAR'S BODY

---

**F**RIENDS, Romans, countrymen! lend me your ears;  
I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.  
The evil that men do lives after them;  
The good is oft interred with their bones;  
So let it be with Cæsar. The noble Brutus  
Hath told you, Cæsar was ambitious;  
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,  
And grievously hath Cæsar answered it.  
Here, under leave of Brutus, and the rest,—  
For Brutus is an honorable man,  
So are they all, all honorable men,—  
Come I to speak in Cæsar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me:  
But Brutus says he was ambitious,  
And Brutus is an honorable man.  
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,  
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:  
Did this in Cæsar seem ambitious?  
When that the poor have cried, Cæsar hath wept;  
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,  
And Brutus is an honorable man.  
You all did see, that, on the Lupercal,  
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,  
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?  
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,  
And, sure, he is an honorable man.  
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,  
But here I am to speak what I do know.  
You all did love him once, not without cause:  
What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?  
O judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts,  
And men have lost their reason!—Bear with me;  
My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar,  
And I must pause till it come back to me.

But yesterday the word of Cæsar might  
Have stood against the world; now lies he there,  
And none so poor to do him reverence.  
O masters! if I were disposed to stir  
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,  
I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,  
Who, you all know, are honorable men.  
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose  
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,  
Than I will wrong such honorable men.

But here's a parchment, with the seal of Cæsar;  
I found it in his closet; 'tis his will.  
Let but the commons hear this testament,—  
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,—  
And they would go and kiss dead Cæsar's wounds,  
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood;  
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,  
And, dying, mention it within their wills,  
Bequeathing it, as a rich legacy,  
Unto their issue.

If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.  
You all do know this mantle; I remember  
The first time ever Cæsar put it on;  
'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent;  
That day he overcame the Nervii.—  
Look! In this place ran Cassius' dagger through;  
See what a rent the envious Casca made;  
Through this, the well-beloved Brutus stabbed,  
And, as he plucked his cursed steel away,  
Mark how the blood of Cæsar followed it,  
As rushing out of doors, to be resolved  
If Brutus so unkindly knocked, or no;  
For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel;  
Judge, O ye gods, how dearly Cæsar loved him!  
This was the most unkindest cut of all;

For when the noble Cæsar saw *him* stab,  
Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,  
Quite vanquished him. Then burst his mighty heart;  
And, in his mantle muffling up his face,  
Even at the base of Pompey's statue,  
Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell.  
Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen!  
Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,  
Whilst bloody treason flourished over us.  
Oh, now you weep; and I perceive you feel  
The dint of pity;—these are gracious drops.  
Kind souls! What, weep you when you but behold  
Our Cæsar's vesture wounded? Look ye here,  
Here is himself, marred, as you see, by traitors.

Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up  
To such a sudden flood of mutiny.  
They that have done this deed are honorable:  
What private griefs they have, alas! I know not,  
That made them do it. They are wise and honorable,  
And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.  
I am no orator, as Brutus is;  
But as you know me all, a plain, blunt man,  
That loved my friend; and that they know full well  
That gave me public leave to speak of him.  
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,

Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,  
To stir men's blood;—I only speak right on;  
I tell you that which you yourselves do know;  
Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor, poor dumb  
mouths,

And bid them speak for me. But were I Brutus,  
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony  
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue  
In every wound of Cæsar, that should move  
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny!

*William Shakespeare (1564–1616).*

## RIENZI'S ADDRESS TO THE ROMANS

---

**I**N 1347 the tyranny of the Roman aristocracy was such that it finally led to a revolution of the people. For some years Rienzi, whose brother had been wantonly slain by one of the nobles, had openly opposed them in their tyrannical conduct, but without success. Finally he came to the conclusion that a revolution was the only method by which redress might be secured. In a powerful speech he urged the overthrow of the aristocracy and proposed many reforms and new laws for the government of the people. This speech as we have it is taken from the play of Rienzi, written, in blank verse, by an English woman, Mary Russell Mitford.

## RIENZI'S ADDRESS TO THE ROMANS

---

**I** COME here not to talk. You know too well  
The story of our thralldom. We are slaves!  
The bright sun rises to his course, and lights  
A race of slaves! he sets, and his last beam  
Falls on a slave!—not such as, swept along  
By the full tide of power, the conqueror leads  
To crimson glory and undying fame,  
But base, ignoble slaves—slaves to a horde  
Of petty tyrants; feudal despots; lords,  
Rich in some dozen paltry villages,  
Strong in some hundred spearmen; only great  
In that strange spell—a name.

Each hour dark fraud,  
Or open rapine, or protected murder,  
Cries out against them. But this very day,  
An honest man, my neighbor (there he stands),  
Was struck—struck like a dog, by one who wore  
The badge of Ursini, because, forsooth,  
He tossed not high his ready cap in air

Nor lifted up his voice in servile shouts  
At sight of that great ruffian! Be we men,  
And suffer such dishonor?—men, and wash not  
The stain away in blood?

Such shames are common.

I have known deeper wrongs. I that speak to you,  
I had a brother once (a gracious boy),  
Full of gentleness, of calmest hope,  
Of sweet and quiet joy: there was the look  
Of heaven upon his face, which limners give  
To the beloved disciple. How I loved  
That gracious boy! Younger by fifteen years,  
Brother at once and son! He left my side,  
A summer bloom on his fair cheek, a smile  
Parting his innocent lips: in one short hour,  
That pretty, harmless boy was slain! I saw  
The corse, the mangled corse, and then I cried  
For vengeance!

Rouse ye, Romans! rouse ye, slaves!  
Have ye brave sons? Look, in the next fierce brawl,  
To see them die. Have ye fair daughters? Look  
To see them live, torn from your arms, distained,  
Dishonored; and, if ye dare call for justice,  
Be answered by the lash.



Yet this is Rome,  
That sat on her seven hills, and, from her throne  
Of beauty, ruled the world! Yet we are Romans!  
Why, in that elder day, to be a Roman  
Was greater than a king! And, once again,  
(Hear me, ye walls, that echoed to the tread  
Of either Brutus!) once again, I swear,  
The Eternal City shall be free!

*Mary Russell Mitford* (1786–1855).

## THE MEN TO MAKE A STATE

---

**T**HE "Men to Make a State" was delivered in 1849 by George Washington Doane at a Fourth of July celebration at Burlington College. It was dedicated to "Major-General Winfield Scott, General-in-chief, a model of the men to make a state." A brief review of the life of General Scott will show that his career was one of long and faithful service to his country. This was the type of man that the author has in mind when he describes the many qualities that the good citizen must possess. These are the qualities that he urges us as good citizens to take for our standards.

## THE MEN TO MAKE A STATE

---

**T**HE men to make a state must be intelligent men. I do not mean that they must know that two and two make four; or, that six per cent. a year is half per cent. a month. I take a wider and a higher range. I limit myself to no mere utilitarian intelligence. This has its place. And this will come almost unsought. The contact of the rough and rugged world will force men to it in self-defence. The lust of worldly gain will drag men to it for self-aggrandizement. But men so made will never make a state. The intelligence which that demands, will take a wider and a higher range. Its study will be man. It will make history its chief experience. It will read hearts. It will know men. It will first know itself. What else can govern men? Who else can know the men to govern men? The right of suffrage is a fearful thing. It calls for wisdom, and discretion, and intelligence, of no ordinary standard. It takes in, at every exercise, the interests of all the nation. Its results reach forward through time into eternity. Its discharge must be accounted for among

the dread responsibilities of the great day of judgment. Who will go to it blindly? Who will go to it passionately? Who will go to it, as a sycophant, a tool, a slave? How many do! These are not the men to make a state.

The men to make a state must be honest men. I do not mean men that would never steal. I do not mean men that would scorn to cheat in making change. I mean men with a single face. I mean men with a single eye. I mean men with a single tongue. I mean men that consider always what is right; and do it at whatever cost. I mean men who can dine, like Andrew Marvel, on a neck of mutton; and whom, therefore, no king on earth can buy. Men that are in the market for the highest bidder; men that make politics their trade, and look to office for a living; men that will crawl where they cannot climb;—*these* are not the men to make a state.

The men to make a state must be brave men. I do not mean the men that pick a quarrel. I do not mean the men that carry dirks. I do not mean the men that call themselves hard names—as Bouncers, Killers, and the like. I mean the men that walk with open face and unprotected breast. I mean the men that *do*, but do not talk. I mean the men that dare to stand alone. I mean the men that are to-day where they were yes-

terday, and will be there to-morrow. I mean the men that can stand still and take the storm. I mean the men that are afraid to kill, but not afraid to die. The man that calls hard names, and uses threats; the man that stabs, in secret, with his tongue, or with his pen; the man that moves a mob to deeds of violence and self-destruction; the man that freely offers his last drop of blood, but never sheds the first;—these are not *the men* to make a state.

The men to make a state must be religious men. States are from God. States are dependent upon God. States are accountable to God. To leave God out of states, is to be atheists. I do not mean that men must cant. I do not mean that men must wear long faces. I do not mean that men must talk of conscience, while they take your spoons. One has shrewdly called hypocrisy the tribute which vice pays to virtue. These masks and vizors, in like manner, are the forced concession which a moral nature makes to him whom, at the same time, it dishonors. I speak of men who feel and own a God. I speak of men who feel and own their sins. I speak of men who think the cross no shame. I speak of men who have it in their hearts as well as on their brows. The men that own no future, the men that trample on the Bible, the men that never pray, are not the men to make a state.

The men to make a state are made by faith. A man that has no faith, is so much flesh. His heart, a muscle; nothing more. He has no past, for reverence; no future, for reliance. He lives, so does a clam. Both die. Such men can never make a state. There must be faith, which furnishes the fulcrum Archimedes could not find, for the long lever that should move the world. There must be faith to look through clouds and storms up to the sun that shines as cheerily on high as on creation's morn. There must be faith that can lay hold on heaven, and let the earth swing from beneath it, if God will. There must be faith that can afford to sink the present in the future; and let time go, in its strong grasp upon eternity. This is the way that men are made, to make a state.

The men to make a state are made by self-denial. The willow dallies with the water, and is fanned forever by its coolest breezes, and draws its waves up in continual pulses of refreshment and delight; and is a willow; after all. An acorn has been loosened, some autumnal morning, by a squirrel's foot. It finds a nest in some rude cleft of an old granite rock, where there is scarcely earth to cover it. It knows no shelter, and it feels no shade. It squares itself against the storms. It shoulders through the blast. It asks no favor, and gives none. It grapples with the rock. It crowds up toward

the sun. It is an oak. It has been seventy years an oak. It will be an oak for seven times seventy years, unless you need a man-of-war to thunder at the foe that shows a flag upon the shore, where freemen dwell; and then you take no willow in its daintiness and gracefulness; but that old, hardy, storm-stayed and storm-strengthened oak. So are the men made that will make a state.

The men to make a state are themselves made by obedience. Obedience is the health of human hearts; obedience to God; obedience to father and to mother, who are, to children, in the place of God; obedience to teachers and to masters, who are in the place of father and of mother; obedience to spiritual pastors, who are God's ministers; and to the powers that be, which are ordained of God. Obedience is but self-government in action; and he can never govern men who does not govern first himself. Only *such* men can make a state.

*George W. Doane (1799–1859).*

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS A NATION

---

**T**HE celebration of the Constitution Centennial was held in Philadelphia in September, 1887. It was attended with brilliant and imposing ceremonies. A commission representing each state and territory conducted the enterprise. On the first day the progress of the arts and sciences was reviewed in a grand industrial parade in which over twelve thousand men participated. On the second day a military parade, to the number of more than thirty thousand Federal and State troops, passed in review before President Cleveland. On the third and last day occurred the literary exercises commemorative of the framing of the Constitution. This was the actual memorial day, being the same month and day on which the members of the convention of 1787 completed and signed their work and sent it to the colonies for ratification. It was on this occasion that President Cleveland delivered his beautiful word-picture of American spirit which we know as "One Hundred Years a Nation."



## ONE HUNDRED YEARS A NATION

---

**I** DEEM it a very great honor and pleasure to participate in these impressive exercises.

Every American citizen should on this centennial day rejoice in his citizenship.

He will not find the cause of his rejoicing in the antiquity of his country, for among the nations of the earth his stands with the youngest. He will not find it in the glitter and the pomp that bedeck a monarch and dazzle abject and servile subjects, for in his country the people themselves are rulers. He will not find it in the story of bloody foreign conquests, for his government has been content to care for its own domain and people.

He should rejoice because the work of framing our Constitution was completed one hundred years ago to-day, and also because, when completed, it established a free government. He should rejoice because this Constitution and government have survived so long, and also because they have survived so many blessings and have demonstrated so fully the strength and value

of popular rule. He should rejoice in the wondrous growth and achievements of the past one hundred years, and also in the glorious promise of the Constitution through centuries to come.

We shall fail to be duly thankful for all that was done for us one hundred years ago, unless we realize the difficulties of the work then in hand, and the dangers avoided in the task of forming "a more perfect union" between disjointed and inharmonious States, with interests and opinions radically diverse and stubbornly maintained.

\* \* \* \*

In the face of all discouragements, the fathers of the republic labored on for four long, weary months, in alternate hope and fear, but always with rugged resolve, never faltering in a sturdy endeavor sanctified by a prophetic sense of the value to posterity of their success, and always with unflinching faith in the principles which make the foundation of a government by the people.

At last their task was done. It is related that upon the back of the chair occupied by Washington as the president of the Convention a sun was painted, and that as the delegates were signing the completed Constitution one of them said: "I have often and often, in the course of the session, and in the solicitude of my hopes

and fears as to its issue, looked at that sun behind the president without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. But now at length I know that it is a rising and not a setting sun.”

We stand to-day on the spot where this rising sun emerged from political night and darkness; and in its own bright meridian light we mark its glorious way. Clouds have sometimes obscured its rays, and dreadful storms have made us fear; but God has held it in its course, and through its life-giving warmth has performed his latest miracle in the creation of this wondrous land and people.

As we look down the past century to the origin of our Constitution, as we contemplate its trials and its triumphs, as we realize how completely the principles upon which it is based have met every national peril and every national need, how devoutly should we confess, with Franklin, “God governs in the affairs of men”; and how solemn should be the reflection that to our hands is committed this ark of the people’s covenant, and that ours is the duty to shield it from impious hands. We receive it sealed with the tests of a century. It has been found sufficient in the past; and in all the future years it will be found sufficient, if the American people are true to their sacred trust.

Another centennial day will come, and millions yet

unborn will inquire concerning our stewardship and the safety of their Constitution. God grant that they may find it unimpaired; and as we rejoice in the patriotism and devotion of those who lived a hundred years ago, so may others who follow us rejoice in our fidelity and in our jealous love for constitutional liberty.

*Grover Cleveland* (1837–1908).



BLOOMSBURG UNIVERSITY



3 2404 00243146 4

PN

4201

.J14

HAAS

15304

Standard selections for

PN

4201

.J14

HAAS

15304

Standard selections  
for declamation

Library

Bloomsburg University

Bloomsburg, PA. 17815

